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**Embassy Hosts Global Give Back Circle Scholarship Program**

U.S. Ambassador to Kenya Robert F. Godec hosted a reception for the Kenyan Global Give Back Circle program on Thursday, May 9, 2013 to highlight a shining example of how the private sector and the development community can work together to bring transformational change. Attendees included business leaders and private sector sponsors from Microsoft, Standard Chartered Bank, Deloitte, Equity Bank, KPMG, Old Mutual, Ecolab, Barclays, Safaricom, Monsanto, and other organizations committed to mentoring, educating, and readying disadvantaged girls for the workforce. “The Global Give Back Circle is much more than a scholarship program. It is an investment in Kenya’s youth and its future workforce and leadership and investing in Kenya’s young people is arguably the most important investment donors, government officials, or business leaders can make at this moment in Kenya’s history. Investing in youth is a vital component of the US-Kenya partnership. Through the U.S. Agency for International Development, the American people are currently investing more than \$100 million, or over 8.3 billion Ksh, in education and youth programs in Kenya,” said Ambassador Godec at the event.

It was an evening full of emotions and excitement as the beneficiaries presented their projects in the areas of education, environment, health, and special needs, and expressed how scholarships might have an impact in their lives and their communities. Ambassador Godec applauded the outstanding job done by young Kenyans who are working hard to improve their lives and he also extended thanks to the companies that were also present contributing to scholarships, computers for ICT labs, internships, mentorship, or making a difference in some other way. He said “As I travel around Kenya, my belief in the potential of Kenya’s youth is reaffirmed. I have met young people who show remarkable leadership skills and helped secure peace in the recent national election. I have met young people who have established their own savings and credit organizations and are leading the investment in a new generation of entrepreneurs and I have met those who are well on their way to making an AIDS-free generation in Kenya a reality.”



*Linda Lockhard, Founder of the Global Give Back Circle showing a photo of Bill Clinton, previous U.S. President and one of the recipients of the program.*



*U.S. Ambassador Godec with Linda Lockhard, Founder of the Global Give Back Circle*

The Global Give Back Circle is a Clinton Global Initiative and is a scholarship program for Kenyan girls from disadvantaged backgrounds, many of them orphans. The program gives girls the skills, savvy, and support to escape the cycle of poverty and empower the next generation. The program matches girls with mentors from the Kenyan and U.S. business communities, and provides personal finance and life skills

training, information and communications technology training, and tuition and living expenses for the scholars. In exchange, the young women commit to “giving back” to their communities.

The program has grown from 35 scholarship recipients in 2006 to 535 scholars today. The momentum is due in part to U.S. Embassy support for a private sector “call to action.” In 2011, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) committed \$3.5 million to the Global Give Back Circle, which is matched by \$3.5 million from private sector companies.



*U.S. Ambassador Godec and recipients winners from different categories*